

Bristol Bay Watershed, Alaska

Draft Roll Out/Communication Plan – Draft 02/03/11 3:40 pm (PDT)

Spokespeople: Dennis McLerran, Rick Parkin

Public Affairs contacts: Marianne Holsman, Hanady Kader

Overall Communication Plan/Timeline

Monday, February 7th

- ☐ Dennis arrives Anchorage at 6:00 pm
- ☐ Administrator calls to AK Senators Begich and Murkowski and Governor Parnell
- ☐ Administrator calls CEQ, USACOE and Dept. of Interior
- ☐ (8:00 AM PST) Regional Administrator sends letters to tribal leaders via emailed PDF
 - 9 federally recognized tribes in the Bristol Bay Watershed who requested that we “initiate a 404(c) public process”
 - 2 federally recognized tribes who requested that we wait for a permit before we take action under 404(c)
 - 21 other federally recognized tribes in the watershed
- ☐ Regional Administrator sends letters to federal partner agencies via emailed PDF
- ☐ (1:00 PM) Region issues press release
- ☐ (PM) Congressional and Stakeholder calls

Tuesday, February 8th

- ☐ Dennis meets w/Resource Development Council (side meeting already planned for AFE)
- ☐ Dennis meets w/Alaska Conservation Council
- ☐ Meeting with federal agency counterparts: US Army Corps AK District Colonel, AK Special Assistant, BOEMRE Director, FWS Director

Wednesday, February 9th

- ☐ Dennis delivers keynote speech at 8:00 at AFE, includes discussion of path forward on Bristol Bay
- ☐ Dennis meets w/Alaska Commissioners (tentative)
- ☐ Host Bristol Bay availability for Tribes

Key Messages/Talking Points

- 1) EPA has heard from many people with varying perspectives on the development of potential mining projects in the Bristol Bay watershed. Some want EPA to use its authority under Section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) to protect Bristol Bay now, while others want projects to proceed through the federal and state permit processes before a CWA Section 404(c) action.
- 2) We were specifically petitioned by nine federally recognized tribes to initiate a public process under Section 404(c) to protect the resources in two river drainages in the watershed from metallic sulfide mining. Two other federally recognized tribes asked that we wait for mines to submit permit applications before we act.
- 3) EPA has not made a decision regarding use of our Clean Water Act authority to restrict or prohibit mining or development mine. We are, however, conducting a Watershed Analysis for the Bristol Bay Watershed. This assessment will be an open, transparent process that will include gathering scientific data about the watershed and the potential impacts of development as well as opportunities for public input.
- 4) One of EPA's top priorities is to protect Alaska's waters, natural resources, and the communities that depend on them. Our goal is to ensure that the environmental, water quality and public health interests of Bristol Bay residents are protected.
- 5) The Bristol Bay Watershed is home to the world's largest sockeye salmon fishery as well as strong runs of chum salmon, silver salmon and king salmon. The Bristol Bay watershed is a unique resource of global significance supporting an Alaska Native culture, the last source of wild Pacific salmon at historic numbers, and hundreds of millions of dollars in annual fisheries revenues.
- 6) EPA has tribal trust responsibilities to work with the federally recognized tribes to protect their homes, subsistence cultures and natural resource-based economies. Under any scenario, EPA will fulfill an obligation to conduct government-to-government consultation with native villages that might be affected by our actions.

Outreach to Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Contact information	Who	Method	When	Done
Prior to AFE Speech					
Governor Parnell		Administrator	Phone	AM Monday	
Sen. Lisa Murkowski, AK		Administrator	Phone	AM Monday	
Sen. Mark Begich, AK		Administrator	Phone	AM Monday	
Federal Agency Partners D.C. (Interior, CEQ, USACOE)		Administrator	Phone	AM Monday	
32 Federally Recognized Tribes		McLerran, Parkin	Letter, Calls to confirm	AM Monday	
Federal agency partners (USACOE, USFWS, DOI, NOAA Fisheries, USGS, Park Service)		McLerran,	Letter, Mtg. at Forum	AM Monday	
ADEC Commissioner Larry Hartig	Claire Fishwick, scheduler 907-465-5065	McLerran, Combes	Phone	AM Monday	
Rep. Don Young, AK		Combes	Phone	AM Monday	
Pebble Partnership	John Shively Chief Executive Officer Tel: 907 339 2600 Cell: Ex. 6 PII	McLerran	Phone	PM Monday	
Trout Unlimited and Consultants	Shoren Brown, Wayne Nastri Ex. 6 PII	Dunbar	Phone	PM Monday	
Bristol Bay Native Corp.		Parkin		PM Monday	
Bristol Bay Native Assn.		Parkin		PM Monday	
Sen. Patty Murray, WA		Dunbar		PM Monday	
Sen. Maria Cantwell, WA		Dunbar		PM Monday	
Rep. Jay Inslee, WA		Dunbar		PM Monday	

Past coverage and positions:

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/print/2010/12/bristol-bay/dobb-text>

Alaskan Members of Congress Excerpts on Pebble Mine Project

Collected Feb. 1, 2011

Mining is important to the Alaska economy and provides good jobs throughout our state, but Pebble Mine raises serious concerns for me. I am not convinced at this time with current technology that we can develop Pebble while also protecting the renewable resources of the region. However, we do need to bring more resources to the table to build a sustainable, strong economy in the region that provides jobs in the communities.

- **Mark Begich, Anchorage Daily News, August 2008**

<http://www.adn.com/2008/08/19/498871/mark-begich-democrat.html>

The federal government should act as a partner, not a barrier, to resource development in our state. Next year I will continue as ranking member (or become chair) on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee and will become the same for the Appropriations subcommittee that controls Interior and EPA's budget. From those positions, I will maintain constant pressure to must sure the federal government takes the side of Alaskans, not Outside interests, in debates over where and when resource production should take place.

I strongly support development of the tremendous oil and gas resources in the Beaufort and Chukchi seas, and am working to overturn the current administration's moratorium on exploration in the area. After verifying that development plans are safe and an immediate and effective response will occur in the event of a spill, the federal government's top priority should be to allow development to proceed in this area.

The proposed Pebble mine is a different case. The federal government should insist on a full, fair and complete environmental impact statement to assess the risks of the mine on Bristol Bay water quality. But the government, notably EPA, should wait to determine the project's specific impacts and not attempt to expand its authority under a section of Clean Water Act (Section 404(c)) to attempt to kill tailings disposal options before the studies are finished, a precedent that could hurt all future mineral development nationwide. Once Alaskans have all the facts and are able to reach a consensus position on the mine's development the federal government should follow our lead and stand with whatever decision we, as a state and as Alaskans, make.

- **Lisa Murkowski, Alaska Journal of Commerce, October 2010**

http://www.alaskajournal.com/stories/102910/loc_qalm.shtml

Deliberative—Attorney/Client Privileged—Not Subject to FOIA

Until all the environmental studies and a final mining plan are finished it is premature to support or oppose Pebble. Clearly the concern is what the effect on water quality there will be if the ore is mined by an open pit process. While I support mining, I will not trade fish for gold and will support the mine only if it can be built without appreciable risk to fisheries and the lifestyles of bay residents.

- **Lisa Murkowski, Anchorage Daily News, October 2010**

<http://www.adn.com/2010/10/23/1516438/congress-governor-candidate-q.html#>

The governor did not say whether he was for the controversial Pebble Mine project near Lake Iliamna. But he said the state's permitting process was sufficient to determine whether the project should move forward.

"We're never going to allow a mine that trades the future of one resource for another," Parnell said. "However, neither will we be bullied into denying a project before the permitting process has run its course."

- **Gov. Sean Parnell, Anchorage Daily News, March 2010**

<http://www.adn.com/2010/03/14/1183483/parnell-reiterates-criticism-against.html#>

I believe that a well-managed, scientific permitting process with public input should determine whether a project moves forward. Politicians shouldn't be picking which projects get developed and which don't -- that leads to a corrupt "buddy-buddy" system where friends are rewarded rather than science and the public dictating outcomes.

- **Gov. Sean Parnell, Anchorage Daily News, October 2010**

<http://www.adn.com/2010/10/23/1516438/congress-governor-candidate-q.html#>

I will not risk a renewable resource for the exploitation of a non-renewable resource. The health of the renewable resource should always come first. That said, there may be new methods that would allow extraction less destructive than the proposed open pit.

Also, the Pebble project, although huge, may be too low grade to be economic. What happens if it folds before reclamation? There must be a very high bond up front before any work starts.

- **Congressman Don Young, Anchorage Daily News, October 2010**

<http://www.adn.com/2010/10/23/1516438/congress-governor-candidate-q.html#>

Additional News Clips:

Juneau Empire: Legislators spar over Pebble Mine study

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner: Parnell reserves judgment on Pebble Mine

Anchorage Daily News: Native corporation joins effort to stop Pebble mine